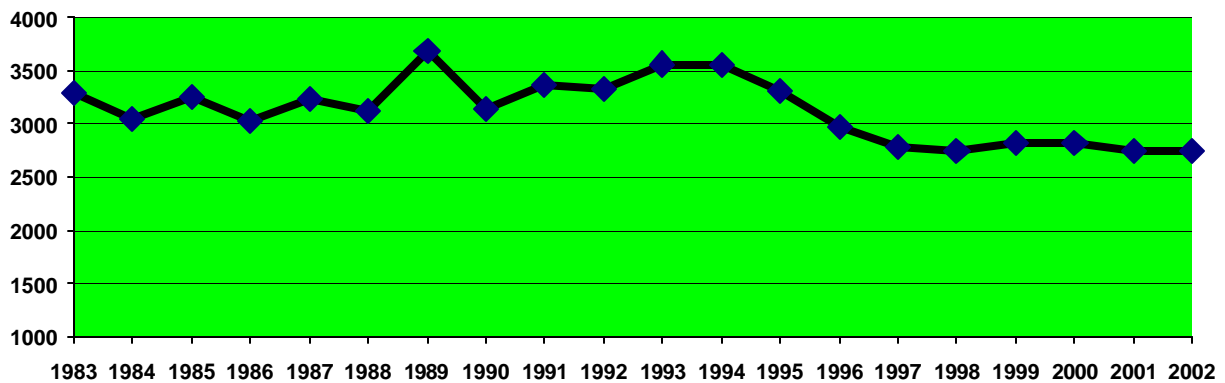


LARCENY

Larceny is the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another. It includes crimes such as shoplifting, pocket-picking, thefts from motor vehicles, thefts of auto parts and accessories, horse thefts, and bicycle thefts, in which no use of force, violence, fraud, or trespass occurs. In the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, this crime category does not include embezzlement, "con" games, forgery, and worthless checks. Motor vehicle theft is also excluded from this category, as it is a separate crime index offense.

Larceny in Cambridge, 1983-2002



Larceny is the most common "Index" or "Part I" crime, accounting for just over 60 percent of the serious crime total. Larceny often produces the most patterns. Numbers and patterns will undoubtedly remain high as we continue into the 21st century. The three categories that produced some of the highest numbers – larcenies from buildings, motor vehicles, and persons – are often fueled by changes in technology. As electronics such as laptops and cellular phones evolve, they become easier to steal, conceal, and ultimately sell. Despite the high number of incidents reported, it remains unclear how accurately this number reflects the actual number of larcenies committed. Larceny remains one of the most underreported crimes. The larceny total does not include incidents where victims did not bother to call the police, which may be due to the low value of the items stolen, and incidents where the larceny goes unnoticed.

Larceny is further broken down into the nine categories listed below. As can be seen from the table, there were no notable changes in larceny totals this year.

| Categorization | 2001 | 2002 | % Change |
|----------------------------------|------|------|----------|
| Larcenies from Buildings | 517 | 521 | +1% |
| Larcenies from MV | 691 | 748 | +8% |
| Larcenies of Bicycles | 318 | 264 | -17% |
| Larcenies from Persons | 407 | 394 | -3% |
| Shoplifting | 463 | 452 | -2% |
| Larcenies of Services | 29 | 26 | -10% |
| Larcenies from Residences | 175 | 203 | +16% |
| Larcenies of License Plates | 100 | 94 | -6% |
| Other (Unclassifiable) Larcenies | 40 | 62 | +55% |

LARCENY FROM BUILDINGS

Larcenies from Buildings are non-burglary thefts from commercial establishments. "Non-burglary" means that either the offender had a specific right to be on the premises, or that the building was open to the general public, and that no force was used to gain entry to the building where the theft was committed.

There were 521 larcenies from buildings reported this year. This total represents a forty percent decrease from totals reported almost a decade ago.

The following are the most common larceny from building scenarios:

1. A thief walks into an office building during open business hours, posing as a delivery person or claiming to be looking for an employee that does not exist. The thief moves unnoticed into an empty office and takes personal or company property. Credit cards and laptops are favorite targets. The thief then escapes unseen. This scenario accounted for 24% of the total reported.
2. Someone leaves his or her belongings unattended for a short time, such as leaving a coat in a public coat closet, and then comes back to find the property missing. 17% of incidents reported occurred in this manner.
3. A thief finds him or herself in a situation where the opportunity arises to steal from a depository such as a safe or a cash register and the thief cannot resist. This scenario accounted for 12% of the total reported.
4. A thief pries open a locker at a fitness club, targeting credit cards to be used afterwards at various commercial establishments. 11% of incidents reported occurred in this manner.
5. A thief lurks in a school hallway, waiting for the opportunity to steal property left unattended in classrooms or left unlocked in school desks or lockers. This scenario accounted for 8% of the total reported.
6. An employee of a commercial establishment leaves his or her personal property in a "back room" where he or she thinks it will be safe. Later, they notice that the property is missing. 8% of incidents reported occurred in this manner.

Preventing Larcenies from Buildings

- Office buildings should develop a comprehensive security policy involving all employees. The policy should include a prohibition against leaving expensive equipment—particularly laptop computers—unattended. Employees should be encouraged to question suspicious or unfamiliar people, or to report them to the security department.
- Don't leave expensive personal property in health club lockers. A better solution is a "fanny pack" or other strap-on carrier that you can keep with you at all times.
- Retail establishments should provide individual lockers, with locks, for employee property. Leaving it behind the counter or in a "back room" is an invitation for theft.
- Take extreme care of your personal property while shopping and dining. Keep it in sight, and never leave it unattended, not even for a minute.
- Report all thefts, no matter how minor, to the police department. Greater reporting will allow us to

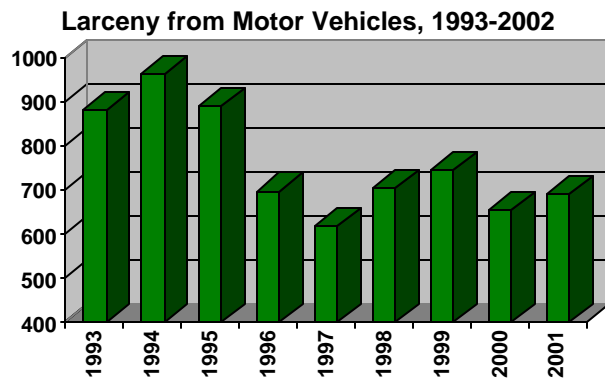
Top 5 Hot Spots of 2002

1. Cambridgeside Galleria Mall
100 Cambridgeside Place - 43 incidents
 2. Cambridge Rindge & Latin School
459 Broadway - 20 incidents
 3. Charles Square Hotel Health Club
5 Bennett Street - 15 incidents
 4. Bally's Health Club
1815 Mass. Ave. - 14 incidents
 5. Mount Auburn Hospital
330 Mount Auburn Street - 10 incidents
- Dance Studio
536 Mass. Ave. - 10 incidents

| AREA | 2001 | 2002 |
|---------------------------|------|------|
| Galleria/East Cambridge | 102 | 88 |
| Kendall Square/MIT | 61 | 52 |
| Inman Square | 28 | 30 |
| Central Square | 95 | 87 |
| Cambridgeport/Riverside | 35 | 25 |
| Bay Square/Upper Broadway | 22 | 34 |
| Harvard Square | 68 | 68 |
| 1500-1900 Mass. Ave. | 30 | 34 |
| Porter Square | 23 | 37 |
| Alewife/West Cambridge | 54 | 66 |

LARCENY FROM MOTOR VEHICLES

Larcenies from Motor Vehicles involve an offender either breaking into a car and stealing valuables within or stealing an exterior accessory (such as tires and hubcaps) from an automobile.



The Mid-Cambridge and East Cambridge neighborhoods reported the most larcenies from motor vehicles this year. The Area 4 and Cambridgeport neighborhoods, which traditionally report the highest totals, came in third and fourth respectively.

The following are a few of the patterns reported during this year:

- The Mid-Cambridge neighborhood remained a hotspot for larcenies from motor vehicles all year long despite several arrests. The majority of activity occurred during the weekend and continued into early week. Breaks were also concentrated overnight, between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. People would often go away for the weekend and then come home to find that their cars had been broken into.
- Almost 40 percent of the incidents reported in East Cambridge have been reported in the last three months. The incidents have been evenly dispersed between the daylight and nighttime hours, but concentrated on the weekends. The parking garage at the Cambridgeside Galleria Mall, the area near Bent & Second Streets, and the area near Rogers & First Streets have reported numerous incidents.
- In March, six vehicles were broken into at a basement parking garage in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. The vehicles were broken into between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. and all showed signs of attempted auto theft.

Historical Perspective

- Larcenies from motor vehicles have consistently averaged between 16-20 percent of the total serious crime index in Cambridge for over 20 years. This year's total is consistent with this trend. Nationally, thefts from vehicles made up 20 percent of all crime reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigations.
- For the first five years of the 1980s, Cambridge averaged 1,050 larcenies from motor vehicles. This average increased to 1,175 per year between 1986 and 1990. Between 1990 and 1995, incidents leveled off to between 850 and 900 incidents per year.
- Throughout 1996, the Cambridge Police Department assigned high priority to the early interdiction of larceny from motor vehicle patterns. Target areas were flooded with directed patrols to combat chronic problem areas where spatial and temporal trends had been identified. The result of these efforts was the lowest larceny from motor vehicle total in 16 years. This number continued to decline in 1997.
- Since 1997, the total has fluctuated between 650 and 750 incidents.

- In April, the parking lot of a North Cambridge apartment complex became a hotspot for larcenies from motor vehicles. Five vehicles were entered into by smashing the windows and in every incident stereos were stolen. This area heated up again in July.
- In September and October, the Holiday Inn Express in East Cambridge reported eight breaks from their parking lot. The thefts were all reported between 10:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. One incident involved an employee who went out to his car and spotted an unknown man crouching behind it. The man fled, but when the employee got home he realized that the trunk of his car had been broken into and a DVD player had been removed.

| NEIGHBORHOOD | 2001 | 2002 |
|---------------------|------|------|
| East Cambridge | 74 | 112 |
| MIT | 28 | 15 |
| Inman/Harrington | 37 | 47 |
| Area 4 | 104 | 86 |
| Cambridgeport | 102 | 76 |
| Mid-Cambridge | 84 | 129 |
| Riverside | 35 | 41 |
| Agassiz | 26 | 47 |
| Peabody | 60 | 50 |
| West Cambridge | 33 | 51 |
| North Cambridge | 76 | 62 |
| Cambridge Highlands | 18 | 15 |
| Strawberry Hill | 12 | 17 |

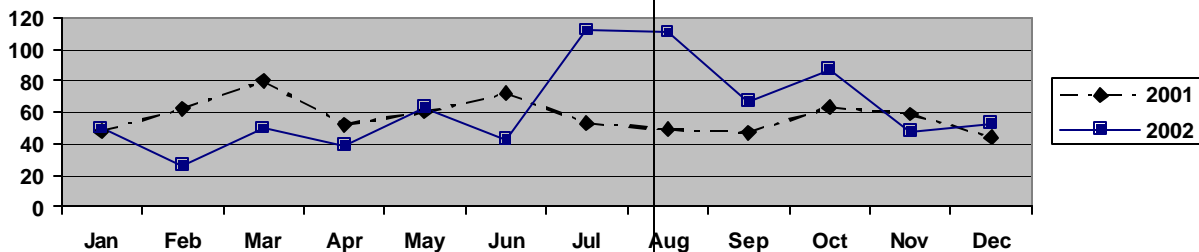
Top Ten Stolen Items of 2002

1. Car Stereos/CD players – 211 reported stolen
2. Cash – 80 reported stolen
3. CDs/Tapes – 76 reported stolen
4. Cellular Telephones – 53 reported stolen
5. Clothing – 47 reported stolen
6. Portable CD player – 45 reported stolen
7. Identification – 42 reported stolen
8. Credit Cards – 40 reported stolen
9. Laptop Computers – 37 reported stolen
10. Personal Papers – 35 reported stolen

The Top Three Methods of Entry

1. The most common method of entry into motor vehicles is by breaking one or more windows of the vehicle. This method was reported in 39 percent of the incidents.
2. The second most common method of entry into motor vehicles is through a door left temporarily unlocked by the owner of the car. This method was reported in 10 percent of the incidents.
3. The third most common method of entry into motor vehicles is by breaking the door lock to the car and forcing entry. This method was reported in 8 percent of the incidents.

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Motor Vehicles



Larcenies of License Plates



| NEIGHBORHOOD | 2001 | 2002 |
|---------------------|------|------|
| East Cambridge | 8 | 14 |
| MIT | 3 | 3 |
| Inman/Harrington | 13 | 9 |
| Area 4 | 14 | 14 |
| Cambridgeport | 14 | 8 |
| Mid-Cambridge | 8 | 2 |
| Riverside | 8 | 12 |
| Agassiz | 1 | 2 |
| Peabody | 5 | 9 |
| West Cambridge | 4 | 3 |
| North Cambridge | 10 | 6 |
| Cambridge Highlands | 12 | 8 |
| Strawberry Hill | 1 | 4 |

A crime related to Larcenies from Motor Vehicles is the self-explanatory Larcenies of License Plates. Ninety-four larcenies of license plates were reported in 2002. Stolen plates are often used to replace license plates on stolen automobiles of the same make and model, or to give a plate to an unregistered motor vehicle. Since the theft of a license plate is often unnoticed and unreported for several weeks, the thief's stolen or unregistered car is somewhat protected from detection during that time. However, new computer technologies which allow patrol officers to quickly check the status of license plates (and what cars they belong to) are making this crime increasingly risky for thieves, thus lowering the rate.

Preventing Larcenies from Motor Vehicles

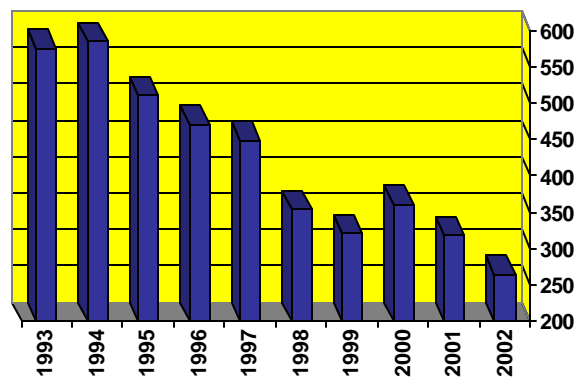
The best and really only way to prevent larcenies from motor vehicles is never to leave valuables in your car unattended—particularly electronic goods such as cellular telephones and laptop computers. Preventing the theft of car radios is more difficult; some car stereo manufacturers make detachable faceplates or stereos that pull easily from the dashboard, allowing you to take it with you or lock it in the trunk.

Parking your car in a driveway or lot rather than on the street provides some minimal deterrence.

LARCENY OF BICYCLES

For the third consecutive year, larceny of bicycles declined in Cambridge. Between 1989 and 1994, bicycle theft exhibited a sharp ascent, soaring from an average of 270 per year in the 1980s to 584 in 1994. Since 1994, the crime has been steadily decreasing, with the exception of the slight increase reported in 2000. These declines reflect, perhaps, the increased publicity given to this crime, the greater availability of bicycle racks, and a crime-prevention conscious public. (The Cambridge Police Department's bicycle theft statistics do not include thefts reported to the MIT or Harvard University Police Departments. These additional thefts could add several hundred to the theft total.)

Bicycle Larceny, 1993-2002



About 65 percent of bicycle thefts fall between May and September, when bicycles pack the streets and sidewalks. The month of July reported the highest number of thefts. They occur most often between 2:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. The police arrest suspects in a scant two or three percent of the incidents; generally, the thief goes unseen. Locks present little difficulty to bicycle thieves, who often bring bolt cutters or pry bars with them; over half of all stolen bicycles had locks on them at the time of theft.

| BUSINESS DISTRICT | 2001 | 2002 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|
| Galleria/East Cambridge | 16 | 16 |
| Kendall Square/MIT | 17 | 10 |
| Inman Square/Harrington | 31 | 29 |
| Central Square | 63 | 63 |
| Cambridgeport/Riverside | 16 | 21 |
| Bay Square/Upper Broadway | 25 | 28 |
| Harvard Square | 50 | 30 |
| 1500–1900 Mass. Ave. | 30 | 26 |
| Porter Square/North Cambridge | 35 | 21 |
| Alwef/West Cambridge | 33 | 20 |

In the early to mid-1990s, Harvard Square had the highest concentration of bicycle thefts in the city, with 70-100 thefts over any given summer. This year the highest concentration was in Central Square. Multiple incidents were reported in front of the Bread & Circus on Prospect Street, in front of the Public Library on Pearl Street, and in front of the YMCA and Boston Sports Club on Mass. Ave. Other significant clusters appeared around the CambridgeSide Galleria, Porter Square, Harvard Square, and along lower Massachusetts Avenue.

One trend the Crime Analysis Unit will continue to

monitor is the increase in the theft of bicycles from porches, yards, hallways, and garages in residential areas all over the city. Historically, most thefts have occurred on the street, but in 2000, the city experienced a reverse in this trend. Over 65 percent of bicycles stolen that year were from protected areas. What made this most unnerving was that these represented areas where people thought their bikes would be safe. For the last two years, however, the majority of bicycle thieves have returned to the streets.

Preventing Bicycle Theft

The facts are grim: *no* lock will stop a determined bicycle thief. However, using a lock is better than not using a lock, and you can maximize the protection a lock provides by:

- Using a steel "U" lock rather than a cable lock
- Locking the *frame* of the bicycle rather than the tire
- Locking your bike at a bicycle rack

Register your bicycle with the Cambridge Police Department. If your bike is stolen and recovered, it will be easier to find you and return your bicycle. Registration cards are available at the Cambridge Police Department and at bicycle shops across the city. Call 349-3236 for more information.

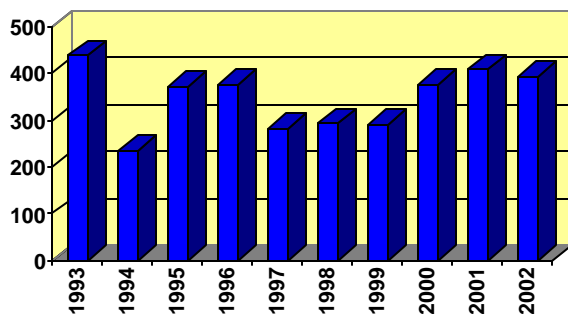
Removing an essential part of the bicycle, such as the seat or one of the wheels, and taking it with you provides some protection against theft.

Don't assume your bicycle is safe because it is in your yard, on your porch, or in your apartment hallway. Bikes should be locked in a secured area, such as a garage or shed.

LARCENY FROM THE PERSON

Larceny from the Person describes pocket-picking or any theft that occurs within the victim's area of control. The thefts are non-confrontational, and usually the victim is not aware of the theft until after it has occurred. If any confrontation between offender and victim takes place, the crime is recorded as a Robbery.

Larceny from the Person, 1993-2002



Three recurring scenarios dominate larcenies from persons:

1. A diner places his or her jacket over the back of a chair, or places her purse under her chair. Someone sitting behind the victim goes through the coat or purse, taking the valuables within, or takes the coat or purse entirely. This accounts for 38 percent of larcenies from the person. Incidents at restaurants and cafes located in Harvard and Central Square dominated this categorization. Concentrations were reported at The Garage in Harvard Square and between the 500 to 700 blocks of Mass. Ave. in Central Square. The Cambridge Galleria also was a hotspot for this crime.
2. While the victim is walking through a public place, a pickpocket stealthily reaches into the victim's coat, purse, or backpack and removes valuables. This scenario accounted for about 8 percent of the larceny from the person reports in 2002, but this percentage is ever decreasing. Pocket-picking requires a particular skill that modern criminals are increasingly failing to develop. Harvard Square and Central Square report the highest pocket-picking numbers, with concentrations between noon and 6:00 P.M.

3. A shopper, usually in a supermarket, keeps her purse in her shopping cart. While she is distracted selecting merchandise, someone pilfers the purse from the cart. This accounts for about 22 percent of reported thefts. The highest concentrations were at the Cambridgeside Galleria, Harvard Square, and Alewife Brook Parkway.

A fourth categorization – theft from moviegoers – reported 8 incidents in 2002. The Harvard Square Cinema and the Fresh Pond Mall Cinema reported four incidents each.

| BUSINESS DISTRICT | 2001 | 2002 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|
| Galleria/East Cambridge | 54 | 37 |
| Kendall Square/MIT | 19 | 14 |
| Inman Square/Harrington | 26 | 7 |
| Central Square | 77 | 81 |
| Cambridgeport/Riverside | 11 | 11 |
| Bay Square/Upper Broadway | 10 | 10 |
| Harvard Square | 124 | 147 |
| 1500–1900 Mass. Ave. | 10 | 17 |
| Porter Square/North Cambridge | 28 | 24 |
| Alewife/West Cambridge | 48 | 46 |

SHOPLIFTING

Shoplifting incidents decreased slightly from 2001. The Cambridgeside Galleria and Central Square reported the most incidents. Since shoplifting incidents are generally only reported when an arrest is made, an increase in shoplifting may be viewed positively: more thieves are being caught. On the other hand, since the vast majority of shoplifting incidents are unseen and go unknown until the store checks its inventory, underreporting of shoplifting is a serious problem. The actual shoplifting number may be six to ten times the statistic given in this report. Police made 307 arrests for shoplifting in 2002 – 184 males and 123 females. Ages ranged from 13 to 60. 49 of those arrested were juveniles.

Shoplifters usually fall into one of five categories:

1. **Juvenile Shoplifters** who steal on a dare, to impress their peers, to get an “adrenaline rush,” or to compensate for lack of money.
2. **Impulse Shoplifters** who seize a sudden chance, such as an unattended dressing room or a blind aisle. Sometimes, the “impulse” is a long line or sudden lack of money.
3. **Alcoholics, vagrants, and drug addicts**, who steal erratically and clumsily. When caught, this type of shoplifter is more likely than others to get violent (see “Shop Owner/Patron” assaults in the Assault section).
4. **Kleptomaniacs** who steal to satisfy a psychological need.
5. **Professionals**, who steal expensive items and resell them to fences or “flea markets.”

| BUSINESS DISTRICT | 2001 | 2002 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|
| Galleria/East Cambridge | 179 | 150 |
| Kendall Square/MIT | 2 | 1 |
| Inman Square/Harrington | 6 | 6 |
| Central Square | 62 | 104 |
| Cambridgeport/Riverside | 30 | 11 |
| Bay Square/Upper Broadway | 4 | 3 |
| Harvard Square | 96 | 79 |
| 1500–1900 Mass. Ave. | 9 | 7 |
| Porter Square/North Cambridge | 27 | 31 |
| Alewife/West Cambridge | 48 | 60 |

Preventing Shoplifting

- Greet and serve customers promptly. Shoplifters do not want your attention.
- If you suspect someone has “pocketed” merchandise, engage them in conversation for a few minutes. They may “ditch” the merchandise as soon as you leave them alone.
- Sales personnel should have a full view of the sales floor area. Rearrange displays, shelving, and lighting to eliminate blind spots.
- Keep displays neat and tidy.
- Be aware of people wearing loose, baggy clothing, carrying shopping bags or large handbags, or customers under the influence of drugs and alcohol.
- Request a commercial survey from one of the Cambridge Police Department’s certified Crime Prevention Officers at 617-349-6009.

LARCENY FROM RESIDENCES

Larcenies from Residences are non-burglary thefts from apartments, hallways, garages, and yards. “Non-burglary” means that no force or trespass was involved in the theft: the thefts are committed by people who have the right to

be on the property. They include thefts committed by guests, roommates, family members, workers, and home health care providers. They also include thefts committed from common areas of apartment buildings, and thefts committed from property surrounding a house, such as the front yard, walkway, or tool shed.

Since larcenies from residences are usually committed by someone known to the victim, pattern identification and intervention by the police department is difficult. The most common larceny from residence scenarios are:

- Thefts committed by visitors or guests to a residence: 27%
- Thefts from a common hallway, foyer, or storage area of an apartment building: 16%
- Thefts of mail or packages delivered by a parcel service: 16%
- Thefts committed by a family member, spouse, or romantic partner (i.e., “domestic thefts”): 12%
- Thefts from a yard, porch, or other area surrounding a residence: 11%.
- Thefts committed by someone working in the apartment, such as a painter, plumber, contractor, or maintenance man: 7%

| NEIGHBORHOOD | 2001 | 2002 |
|---------------------|------|------|
| East Cambridge | 18 | 19 |
| MIT | 0 | 1 |
| Inman/Harrington | 12 | 13 |
| Area 4 | 24 | 19 |
| Cambridgeport | 25 | 27 |
| Mid-Cambridge | 22 | 25 |
| Riverside | 9 | 20 |
| Agassiz | 9 | 10 |
| Peabody | 16 | 28 |
| West Cambridge | 15 | 16 |
| North Cambridge | 19 | 19 |
| Cambridge Highlands | 2 | 2 |
| Strawberry Hill | 4 | 4 |

LARCENY OF SERVICES

This crime includes taxicab fare evasion, “dining and ditching,” “gassing and going,” and other failures to pay for services already rendered. There were 26 of these crimes reported in 2002. The majority of incidents involved restaurant check evasion (31%) and larceny of gasoline (31%). The remainder of the incidents involved taxicab fare evasion (19%), owners who stole their own automobiles from service garages to avoid paying their repair bills (11%), and other miscellaneous larcenies of services (8%).